

whom their note of worldly wisdom is distasteful must blame not so much the writer, as Horace and Cicero, Bolingbroke and La Bruyere De Retz and La Rochefoucault, from whom he had compiled his rules for conduct, and shaped his scheme of life."¹ Sir E. E. Grant-Duff admits the Letters contain a number of coarse expressions and allusions and that many passages inculcate a most detestable morality, yet he says, "I think they ought to be a regular portion of the education of every Englishman who is likely to enter public life tolerable early."² Finally, in the preface to the edition of the Letters is an acknowledgment by the editor that the letters have incurred strong reprehension on two grounds; namely, (1) Some of their maxims are repugnant to good morals; (2) Chesterfield insists too much on manners and graces instead of more solid acquirements."³

The preceding excerpts make quite clear the fact that the Letters furnished advice and teaching in keeping with the social life of the century and that the letters were written not for a moral code to be widely disseminated but for the guidance of a Gentleman of the eighteenth century, the guidance of his son.

The Letters consist of timely instructions, suggestions, advice, and personal interest for the physical, mental, moral, and social development of the son to enable him to be "as near perfection as possible." "Never were so much pains taken for any body's education as for yours; and never had any body those op-

1. Eighteenth Century Vignettes, p 151.

2. Fortnightly Review, June, 1879.

3. Lord Chesterfield's Letters to His Son, Preface p XVIII.